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THE DUTY ON ART.

It is gratifying, indeed, that the agitation for the repeal of the nefarious tariff on art is becoming infused with life. The articles which have appeared in these columns have been extensively quoted in various important daily newspapers throughout the country, and I refer with great pleasure to an editorial note in the May *Century* on this subject as follows:

"What with the new impetus just given to the Metropolitan Museum in New York, the activity of museums and academies throughout the country, the noble endowment of the American Academy in Rome, the improvement of our art schools and the augmenting individual accomplishment of American architects, artists and musicians, America is destined soon to take a still more important place among the art-producing nations of the world. One of the necessary steps in this direction is the removal of the tariff on art works, and the men of light and leading in our government should see that, at the first opportunity, this deleterious and idiotic tax is swept away."

A new argument in this discussion was advanced the other evening in conversation at a club with one of the profoundest thinkers I have ever met. The learned professor held that a tariff on art is a crime against the public at large for the following reason. The records prove that all important objects of art become ultimately the property of the public by being exposed in museums. Even if by sale or by the death of the owner they should pass through two or three different hands, it appears that finally anything that is worth while finds its resting place in a public institution. Reference can be made to the Widener Collection, the Marquand Collection, the Heber R. Bishop, the Catharine Lorillard Wolfe, the William H. Vanderbilt collections and many others. Almost every municipality throughout the country is acquiring an art museum and local collectors frequently present their collections to these museums or purchase pictures for the walls. Mr. Louis Bamberger has just now given the first impetus for an art museum in Newark, N. J. The Providence (R. I.) School of Design has a private benefactor who continually adds to its museum collection. Lincoln, Neb., has such an institution in which two or three gentlemen are interested.

Now the best works of art are kept away from these public institutions through the prohibitive tariff. The marvelous Titian which Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan purchased hangs to-day in the National Gallery of London, instead of in the Metropolitan Museum of New York, because Mr. Morgan is not inclined, and rightly so, to pay an additional \$60,000 tax to bring the painting to this country.

The policy of a tariff on works of art is, therefore, shortsighted and antagonistic to the government's duties to foster education, culture and civilization. Millions are spent by the government on education and one of the best educational forces is penalized.

The duty on art must be abolished!

THE STUDY OF OLD MASTERS.

The fascination which an old painting of merit exercises over its possessor is no psychological riddle. The "Old Masters" are the foundation of art expression to-day—what do we know but what they have taught us? Whistler, Sargent or Chase would never have attained to their eminent stations in the world of art had they not impregnated themselves with Velasquez. The old Italians have been the inspiration of the colorists, the old Dutchmen taught the science of chiaroscuro as it never has been demonstrated. The work of Old Masters is not only the prosody but the syntax of artistic grammar—

again not only the grammar but the anthology of artistic language; not only language but inspiration.

To collect Old Masters—remember, not old daubs from junk-shop or pandhouse—is the ideal enjoyment of those who love the best in art and love to live therewith.

To appreciate and understand the Old Masters should be the aim of true connoisseurs and collectors. Not every dust-begrimed and rain-stained rag deserves his attention.

A volume has just now reached me which is reviewed more fully under "Book Craft," which I regard as a first necessity in every collector's library. It is by Bernhard Berenson, and bears the title "Lorenzo Lotto." While it is, indeed, an exhaustive consideration of this Italian artist and his work, it is more—an essay on the principles of constructive art criticism, which will be helpful to every lover of "Old Masters."



No. 419. Cylindrical Bottle.
Yung-ching.

No. 467. Snuff-bottle. Yung-ching.
Height, 3 inches.

GEO. B. WARREN COLLECTION.

THE COLLECTING OF PORCELAIN.

The collecting of porcelain is one of the most popular fancies. The rarity of many pieces of ceramic makes their possession coveted; their decorative beauty inspires many to indefatigable search.

The secret of the manufacture of this magnificent ware, which Europe received originally from China, and the composition of the paste, was for long a dark mystery. Some thought that it was composed of bones, eggshell, fish scales and sundry other curious ingredients, which had to be buried for one hundred years. Dr. Johnson derives the word porcelain from *pour cent ans*. The proper derivation, however, is from the Portuguese *porcella*, a small pig, also a shell, and the first cups which came from China were called by that name.

It is probable that the Chinese, in the making of porcelain, had in view the imitation of jade, which stone was held sacred and by Confucius regarded as the emblem of all virtues. One of the best-known classes of Chinese porcelain is the "green family," made under the Ming dynasty about the fifteenth century. The tartar dynasty, now in power, has yellow as the

imperial color. The blue and white Nankin is decorated in cobalt-blue under the glaze.

The secret of the composition of "hard paste," the true porcelain, was brought from China by Père d'Entrecolles, a Jesuit missionary, in 1712, who stated that it was composed of two elements, a white clay called *Kaolin*, and feldspar. The later appearing "soft paste" consists of sand, lime, and alkaline materials, vitrified. The glaze is generally composed of pure pegmatite, finely crushed, and applied by immersion after a preliminary baking. The crackling of the glaze, covering it with a network of minute cracks, is done not accidentally, but by a careful process.

The accidental discovery by Johann Friedrich Böttger (in 1707), that the white clay or kaolin used by the Chinese was also found in Europe, was the *naissance* of the Occidental ware. One day Böttger's servant used some very white sand, instead of the proper powder, to powder his master's wig. Its unusual weight led to investigation. This discovery, which led to the manufacture of hard paste porcelain, was kept as a secret of state, and a factory was erected at Meissen. Spite all efforts the secret, however, leaked out and a factory was opened in 1744 at Vienna. The discovery in 1779 of kaolin near Limoges, developed the craft in France, where, at St. Cloud, a factory had already been established since 1702 for the making of "soft paste" porcelain. In 1756 the workshops were transferred to Sèvres.

"Hard paste" porcelain is difficult to decorate, only two ground colors being used to advantage, a dark cobalt-blue and a heavy green made from chrome. "Soft paste" can incorporate many colors. The best-known grounds are *bleu du royaume*, *gros bleu*, *turquoise*, *rose du Barry*, *jonquil*, *vert-pré* and *œil de perdrix*. The painting is done on the surface of the glaze after it has been fired, after which the piece is again sufficiently heated to melt the glaze and incorporate the painting.

Some of the Chinese porcelains, aside from the Nankin, are *Kouan-Ki*, blue decorated vases, marked with the emblems of the Chinese magistracy, such as the pearl, the sacred ax, the sonorous stone and a group of writing materials; *Mandarin*, which is brilliantly colored porcelain, decorated with figures of Chinese officials; *Rose* porcelain, with a surface of brilliant red enamel.

The *Hizen* porcelain comes from Japan, and is also called *Imari*, from the port whence it is exported. It is decorated with blue under the glaze, and red upon the glaze.

A translucent ceramic, resembling porcelain, was made near Florence in the sixteenth century. It is called Medici porcelain, and is exceedingly rare. It is marked by the balls (*palloni*) of the Medici family, sometimes a crude picture of the dome of the Florence cathedral being added.

Of the European porcelains, the first, as has been stated, was made at *Meissen*. It is also called *Vieux Saxe*. The mark is two swords crossed. The Limoges porcelains began to be made in 1779, the modern Limoges constituting the most important ceramic production of France. The *Lunéville* is "soft paste" porcelain, famous for statuettes in biscuit; its improved paste was called *pâte de marbre*. The mark is the name of the improver, Cyfflé.

The *Sèvres* factory is a government institution, as is well known, and its products originally could not be purchased, but were used to furnish the royal palaces, or as presents to friends of the State. Since the Second Empire private individuals have been allowed to purchase them, but they are never sold to the trade. The *Sèvres* which are found in the crockery shops are the *blancs* or undecorated pieces. In these the usual mark S, accompanied by the last two figures of the year in which they were made, is cancelled by a sharp cut across it. These pieces are decorated by outsiders in a manner that closely resembles the real *Sèvres*, and often the cut across the mark is filled up.

The genuine ware must also bear the gilder's and the painter's marks.

Among the best known English porcelains is the *Lowestoft*, a "hard paste" made in Suffolk from 1757-1804, which is one of the most admired, with rich borders in which festoons are a common detail. The *Worcester* is a "soft paste" made since 1751, noted for a peculiar mottled quality of the blue, produced by firing. It has been called *Royal Worcester* since a visit of George III in 1788. The marks are a crescent, or some seal marks copied from Chinese porcelain. From 1828 the word "Chamberlain & Co." was used, and later a combination of four W's. The *Derby* is a "soft paste" porcelain made since 1751, very translucent and the blue very brilliant. It comes in unglazed biscuit-ware, in figures and in groups. The letter D and the name of the potter, "Blow," were used as a mark, while a crown has been added since 1830.

The *Chelsea*, a "soft paste" porcelain made since 1735, is the most admired of the old English porcelains. The *Bow* made at Stratford-le-Bow, near London, is perhaps the earliest. Its mark is a bent bow with an arrow on the string. The *Swansea*, made from 1814-1820, is ranked by some as the most perfect porcelain in England. Its mark is the word, "Swansea," combined with a trident, or two tridents crossed.

The *Copenhagen* porcelain should also be noted. It is a "hard paste" made since 1760; its mark, three waving or rippling lines supposed to represent the waves of the sea. The *Caen* porcelain is a "hard paste" made in Normandy and exceedingly rare, while the *Alcora* porcelain was made in Spain at the end of the eighteenth century. It is a beautiful colored luster, with an A stamped in gold.



EDMUND C. TARBELL.

PEEPING THROUGH THE BLINDS.